

American

NEWS & VIEWS

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U.S. Government Calls for New Ideas to Develop Clean Energy

By Charlene Porter | Staff Writer

Washington — The Obama administration is making progress in its campaign to move the United States forward in the use and development of innovative alternative energy technologies.

Speaking at a national meeting on clean energy August 30, Vice President Biden announced that government investments in companies developing energy innovations are paying off. Five companies that won federal financial backing in 2009 and 2010 have now attracted more than \$100 million in investment capital. Investment of that nature is an indicator that market forces are ready to support and promote what might have begun as fringe ideas.

A White House press release calls the capital investment a “promising milestone” for the work of the Department of Energy’s Advanced Research Projects Agency–Energy (ARPA-E), an agency established in 2009 to promote “development and deployment of transformational and disruptive energy technologies and systems,” according to an agency document.

The companies received between \$1.5 million and \$6 million for their proposals to develop alternative products such as advanced batteries, innovative biofuels or waste heat recovery methods.

“ARPA-E supports the very best of American innovation,” Biden said in a speech to the National Clean Energy Summit 4.0 in Las Vegas. Of the five companies that have gained private sector support in addition to their government backing, Biden said, “They illustrate how a small but strategic investment by the federal government can pay big dividends down the road and bring into the market groundbreaking new technologies.”

ARPA-E is patterned after DARPA, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency. Created in the late 1950s, the agency was assigned to push the boundaries of known technologies to make breakthroughs. Some of its successes are the satellite-based Global Positioning System (GPS), stealth aircraft and the precursor to the Internet.

The secretaries of Agriculture, Energy and the Navy announced another Obama administration initiative August 30, which is also attempting to spur private sector action for innovation in energy. The Cabinet members explained a program investing \$510 million in federal funds in advanced fuels made from plant materials that can enter the nation’s existing energy stream without the

need for infrastructure changes or adjustments or special equipment, known as “drop-in biofuels.”

“These efforts will accelerate advanced technologies to produce infrastructure-compatible biofuels that will replace imported crude oil with secure, renewable fuels made here in the U.S.,” said Energy Secretary Steven Chu.

The Cabinet members are soliciting specific proposals from industry on how to establish a commercially viable biofuels industry. They envision a scheme where government and industry work together to build refineries — or retrofit existing ones — capable of producing drop-in fuels on a commercial scale. The refineries’ output would have to meet military specifications for defense vehicles, aircraft and ships. The proposal also calls for the refineries to be located in geographically diverse locations for ready market access.

Besides developing alternative fuels from domestic sources, the plan also aims to give an economic boost to rural areas with establishment of a new enterprise and the job creation that could follow.

Taken Question on Rhythm Road Visit to Burma

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesperson
August 31, 2011

QUESTION TAKEN AT THE AUGUST 30, 2011 DAILY PRESS BRIEFING

Rhythm Road Visit to Burma

Question: Is this the first cultural group the United States has been able to schedule for Burma?

Answer: Next month, the bluegrass group “Earth String Band” will travel to Asia for a five-country tour that includes stops in Laos, Thailand, Timor Leste, and South Korea. Pending the Burmese government’s approval of visas, the band will also stop in Burma.

This is the third time the State Department has sent Rhythm Road musicians to Burma. The musical group “The Student Loan” visited Burma in 2009, and the musical group “Maya Azucena Band” visited in 2008.

Yesterday, the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs announced the 2011 fall tour schedule for The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad in partnership with Jazz at Lincoln Center.

The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad program uses music and culture as diplomatic tools to bring people

together and foster mutual understanding. To date, 155 musicians from 40 ensembles have toured with The Rhythm Road: American Music Abroad program visiting more than 100 countries on five continents.

While on tour, these Rhythm Road musicians conduct public concerts, master classes, workshops, jam sessions, and collaborations with local musicians and communities.

60th Anniversary of U.S.-Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesperson
August 30, 2011

STATEMENT BY VICTORIA NULAND,
SPOKESPERSON

60th Anniversary of the U.S.-Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty

Today we celebrate the 60th anniversary of the U.S.-Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty, which still serves as the cornerstone of our relationship and a source of stability in the region.

The Philippines and the United States share a deep and abiding friendship forged in a history of common sacrifice. The many Filipinos who served bravely beside American servicemen and women during World War II and the veterans buried at the Manila American Cemetery bear testament to our shared past.

Our alliance with the Philippines continues to grow in the 21st century as our two countries chart a new vision for our critical partnership, in the defense realm and beyond. Whether we are working together to combat extremism, help victims of natural disasters, or stand up for human rights, the people of our countries share a mutual desire to build a better world for future generations.

State Department on Cessation of Southern Kodofan Bombings

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesperson
August 31, 2011

STATEMENT BY VICTORIA NULAND,
SPOKESPERSON

U.S. Calls for Cessation of Southern Kordofan Bombings

The United States remains deeply concerned about reports of continued bombings of civilian areas in Southern Kordofan by the Sudanese Air Force, despite the Government of Sudan's announcement of a unilateral two-week ceasefire last week. The United States urges the Government of Sudan to adhere to its commitment and to immediately cease aerial bombings, particularly of civilian areas.

We are also concerned over allegations of support from the Government of South Sudan to military forces aligned with Sudan People's Liberation Movement--North in Southern Kordofan. The United States calls on both sides to allow unfettered humanitarian access to affected populations in Southern Kordofan and urges the parties to resume formal negotiations to reach a permanent cessation of hostilities and a political settlement.

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov>)